

Cabinet

12 July 2017

Children and Young People's Services Annual Reports and Plans



Report of Corporate Management Team

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Purpose of the Report

- 1 This report presents Cabinet with an executive summary of the following Children and Young People's Services Annual Reports and Plans:
 - The Youth Justice Plan 2017/19.
 - The Annual Report of Fostering Panels and the Fostering Service 2016/17.
 - The Durham Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2016/17.

The Youth Justice Plan 2017/19

Background and Legal Framework

- 2 Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) are statutory partnerships, established under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, with the principal aim of preventing offending by children and young people. Local Authorities are responsible for establishing a Youth Offending Team – the County Durham Youth Offending Service (CDYOS) in County Durham. Police, National Probation Service (NPS) and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) are statutorily required to assist in their funding and operation.
- 3 Local authorities continue to have a statutory duty to submit an annual youth justice plan relating to their provision of youth justice services. Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 sets out the youth offending partnership's responsibilities in producing this plan. It states that it is the duty of each local authority, after consultation with the partner agencies, to formulate and implement an annual youth justice plan.
- 4 The Youth Justice Plan must be submitted to the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) and published in accordance with the directions of the Secretary of State. The deadline for submission is the end of July 2017. The Youth Justice Plan must also be presented to Council.

Key Achievements 2016/17

- 5 The Youth Justice Plan 2017/19 highlights work done to date, together with key achievements and outcomes for 2016/17. It outlines key priorities, budget, staffing, service developments and the service improvement plan for 2017/18.
- 6 A summary of key achievements are included in the Executive Summary of the Youth Justice Plan and include:
 - County Durham Youth Offending Service (CDYOS) has maintained strong performance in relation to the number of first time entrants (FTEs) to the Youth Justice System with 164 FTEs in 2016/17. There has been an 85.5% reduction in FTEs since 2007/8.
 - Continued reduction in the number of young people re-offending and the number of re-offences committed.
 - A reduction of 56.3% in the number of all offences committed and a 60.4% reduction in the number of young people offending since 2010/11.
 - Further development of ClearCut Communication resources to support young people's engagement in the youth justice system. These have won several national awards and are being used by over 40 YOTs across the country.

National Outcome Measures for 2017/18.

- 7 The national outcome measures for CDYOS for 2017/18 continue to be:
 - Reducing first time entrants.
 - Reducing re-offending.
 - Reducing the use of custody (both sentenced and remanded).
 - Ensuring public protection/safeguarding by providing specialist interventions.

The Annual Report of Fostering Panels and the Fostering Service 2016/17

Background

- 8 The National Minimum Standards for Fostering (2001) require that Fostering Agencies report the activity of the Fostering Service to their governing bodies.
- 9 The Annual Report outlines the work of the Fostering Service during 2016/17, together with the activity of the Fostering Panels. It also outlines the future strategic direction of the service to meet the needs of the increased number of Looked After Children.

2016/17 Activity

- 10 The Fostering Service, Foster Carers and Fostering Panels have achieved the following in 2016/17:
- There has been a small increase in the number of mainstream carers. This has risen from 234 households in March 2016 to 237 in March 2017. The number of approved foster placements on 31 March 2017 was 713 which is an increase of 83 placements from the previous year. However, these increases have not kept pace with the level of current demand with continued reliance on Independent provision.
 - The number of children placed with Durham Foster Carers on 31 March 2017 was 552 children. This is an increase of 115 placements since March 2016.
 - The assessment and approval of Family and Friends Foster Carers has continued to be an important aspect of the work of the Fostering Service. There has continued to be an increase in the number of assessments of Family and Friends Foster Carers with 47 being completed in 2016/17. This compares with 39 completed in 2015/16.
 - The Foster Xtra initiative has been developed which aims to provide a multi-agency approach to meet the needs of both children and young people with the most complex needs and challenging behaviour.

Durham County Council Fostering Panels

- 11 The work of the Fostering Panels is focussed on recommendations for the registration and de-registration of foster carers and agreeing long term and permanent matches of children with foster carers. A summary of activity in relation to Fostering Panels in 2016/17 includes:-
- The three Durham Fostering Panels have continued to be very busy, with six extraordinary panels being held to manage workload. It is anticipated that this will continue into 2017/18.
 - As the Looked After Children (LAC) population has risen, the need for additional foster placements has increased, resulting in an increased focus on mainstream foster carer recruitment.
 - The number of temporarily approved Foster Carers (Family and Friends arrangements) has continued to increase with a resultant increase in Form C Fostering Assessments being undertaken.
 - There has been an increase in the number of approved family and friends Foster Carers, with many living outside of the area which presents further challenges in relation to assessment and on-going support.

Strategic Priorities and Key Actions for 2017-18

12 The Fostering Service's strategic priorities and key actions for 2017-18 include :-

- An independent Fostering Service review was completed in April 2017. A service response to this has been finalised which will result in a Service restructure which will allow greater focus and emphasis on effective identification of placements and matching of young people to placements when they first become Looked After. It will also enable the Fostering Service to be more closely aligned to children's social work teams to promote more effective early permanence planning.
- A Placement Efficiency Strategy is in place to ensure that there is senior management oversight and scrutiny of all children who become Looked After through a Placement Resource Panel.
- Foster carer recruitment remains a key priority with a strategic target of 250 new foster carer households having been set for 2017-18.
- The processes and procedures for children who require permanence via long term fostering have been reviewed and a new process will be implemented from July 2017. This will streamline the process and reduce the drift and delay in identifying appropriate permanent placements for children who require them.

Durham Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Annual Report 2016/17

Background

- 13 Statutory Guidance from Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015) requires each LSCB to produce and publish an Annual Report evaluating the effectiveness of safeguarding in the local area.
- 14 The LSCB Annual Report 2016/17 sets out the work of multi-agency partners to ensure effective arrangements are in place to safeguard and protect vulnerable children and young people from abuse and neglect.
- 15 The full annual report is available on the LSCB website at www.durham-lscb.org.uk.
- 16 In addition, the Young People's Annual Report for 2016-17 has been developed with over 70 young people from Durham Constabulary's Police Cadets acting as an editorial group. This group has provided feedback, critique, challenge and has helped to shape the final document. It is written in clear language and provides general safeguarding information from a young person's perspective. The report can be accessed electronically on the LSCB Website above.

Achievements in 2016/17

17 The following have been achieved in 2016/17:

- OfSTED rated the effectiveness of Durham LSCB as 'Good' in May 2016. In their inspection report, OfSTED reported that *'Durham Local Safeguarding Children Board is an ambitious and reflective Board whose effectiveness and functioning has significantly improved since the peer review of October 2014'*.
- *A new methodology for Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) was developed with learning events to over 700 staff.*
- Launch of new online Child Protection Procedures which provides a web based solution that is fully searchable and allows the user to access content from a wide range of devices.
- Interactive Annual Report for Young People which puts children at the heart of the development of the report and provides general safeguarding information from a young person's perspective.
- Trained over 1800 taxi drivers in Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) with safeguarding conditions now built into Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy.

Priorities for 2017/18

18 The Durham LSCB has agreed the following priorities for 2017/18:

- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Neglect
- Empowering Young People
- Working Together.

Recommendations and reasons

19 Cabinet is recommended to:

- (a) note the content of this report;
- (b) endorse the Youth Justice Plan 2017/19 and forward it to full council for approval;
- (c) receive the Annual Report of Fostering Panels and the Fostering Service 2016/17; and
- (d) endorse the Durham LSCB Annual Report and the LSCB Young People's Annual Report.

Background papers

- The Youth Justice Plan 2017/19.
- The Annual Report of Fostering Panels and the Fostering Service 2016/17.
- The Durham LSCB Annual Reports.

20 Full copies of each Report and Plan can be found in the Members' Library.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – The Youth Justice Plan contains CDYOS partnership pooled budget 2017/18. Yearly financial contributions to Durham LSCB are received from partner agencies.

Staffing – CDYOS staff establishment is included in the Youth Justice Plan in line with YJB requirements. The Service is staffed in line with statutory requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The review of the Fostering Service will result in a restructure of the Service. The priorities identified in the LSCB Annual Report will be delivered using existing resources.

Risk – Risks to the future delivery of the CDYOS have been considered and are included in the Youth Justice Plan. The number of Looked After Children has increased over the last year and the trajectory has been upwards for the last three years.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – The Annual Reports and Plans identify the actions to safeguard the needs of vulnerable children and young people.

Accommodation – Not applicable

Crime and Disorder – The statutory function of CDYOS partnership is the prevention of offending by children and young people (Crime and Disorder Act 1998). The LSCB Annual Report shows effective partnership working with the Safe Durham Partnership.

Human Rights – Not applicable.

Consultation – CDYOS Management Board and Partners have been consulted in the development of the Youth Justice Plan. Appropriate consultation with the relevant partner agencies and stakeholders has been undertaken.

Procurement – Not applicable

Disability Issues – No adverse implications.

Legal Implications – The Youth Justice Plan ensures Durham County Council and statutory partners meet their legal responsibilities to CDYOS Partnership. The Annual Reports and Plans have been prepared in line with statutory requirements.